



NEWS RELEASE

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WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FORMER JOPLIN BANK TELLER SENTENCED FOR BANK THEFT

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced today that a former Joplin bank teller was sentenced today for stealing from two Joplin banks.

Tina M. Goodpasture, 25, of Joplin, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Ortrie D. Smith this afternoon to five years of probation, with the first six months in home detention. The court also ordered **Goodpasture** to pay \$37,239.23 in restitution. A co-defendant, **Lisa Marie Destefano**, 30, of Neosho, was sentenced to five years of probation (with the first six months in home detention) on August 20, 2002. The court also ordered **Destefano** to pay \$36,825 in restitution.

Both women had earlier waived their right to indictment by a federal grand jury, Graves said, and pleaded guilty to stealing in excess of \$30,000 from Community Bank and Trust and Great Southern Bank, both in Joplin.

Goodpasture was an employee of Community Bank and Trust from 1996 through September 7, 2000. Prior to her termination, Graves said, she worked at the branch facility at 5570 North Main Street in Joplin. On October 23, 2000, **Goodpasture** began employment with Great Southern Bank, working as a teller at branch facilities at 1232 South Rangeline Drive and 1710 East 32nd Street in Joplin. Great Southern Bank terminated her employment on December 15, 2000.

Goodpasture and **Destefano** met in April 2000, Graves said, and subsequently devised a check cashing scheme. **Destefano** would obtain identification documents for other people, and either manufacture counterfeit checks on other people's bank accounts or obtain other people's checks. **Destefano** would then manufacture or use an unauthorized check, either drawn on a checking account at the bank where **Goodpasture** was working or payable to a person who had a checking account at the bank where **Goodpasture** was working. Graves explained that **Destefano** or another individual then would endorse the payee's name on the back of the check, and present the unauthorized check to **Goodpasture** at the bank to receive cash. On occasion, Graves added, **Goodpasture** would access bank records to obtain the names and account information of legitimate bank customers, and then provide that information to **Destefano** for use in the scheme. **Destefano** and **Goodpasture** split the cash obtained through the scheme.

Destefano and **Goodpasture** executed the scheme at Community Bank and Trust as well as Great Southern Bank, both in Joplin, from August through December 15, 2000, on 10 separate occasions using 13 separate checks. According to Graves, the scheme resulted in an actual loss to Community Bank and Trust of \$24,431.69, and an actual loss to Great Southern Bank of \$13,144. **Destefano** unsuccessfully attempted to execute the scheme at Great Southern Bank in November 2000, Graves added, with an additional intended loss of \$3,000.

Goodpasture, in her guilty plea, also admitted to stealing \$1,163 from Hardee's deposit bags at Great Southern Bank on November 27, 2000.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Douglas C. Bunch. It was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Joplin Police Department and Newton County Sheriff's Department.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at
www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow